American Women Missionaries and Pioneers Collection

Part 1: Missionaries

The Esther Morse Papers, 1921 – 1965

Series I a

Outgoing Original Letters

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Dear Uncle Jay and Family:
I would so enjoy writing to you with pen and ink but there is so much to tell, that I am afraid that method is prohibitive from the point of view of both time and space. So with hopes for your leniency, I will do my best with the 'hunt and peck' typewriter method.

In recounting my impressions and experiences, I presume I should begin at the very first and give an account of the sea voyage. The Pacific lived up to its name and we had a very calm crossing. Probably on that account I was able to be a good sailor! and the trip was very enjoyable.

There were quite a few missionaries on board- about forty, I think, including children. They were all splendid and congenial people. My cabin mate was going to Canton under the Presbyterian Board and our tablemates were three Baptist people going to Japan. These latter we had a great deal of fun with and are keeping in touch with them even now.

At the first port we touched in Japan, a group of ten of us went to Tokyo for the day. We saw the oldest Buddhist temple in the city and had the experience of removing our shoes before entering it. It is spacious, clean and apparently well-cared for. The chief Buddha was a massive idol, but the few worshippers we saw were bowing before one of the smaller idols. Later we saw other Buddhist temples, in Japan and in China, too, but the dirt and squalor about them and the appearances of the worshippers made one of our party say, 'Now I know why I left home to come out here'- and I think we all echoed that statement in our hearts.

Tokyo is called 'the city of beautiful women' and the women and gilrs are wonderfully attractive. The most of them wear the traditional colorful kimona and the wooden shoes held on by a strap over the big toes. There are some elaborate coiffures seen but many women wear their hair drawn smoothly around from a middle parting to a coil in the back. It is very attractive with their oval faces and slanting eyes. We saw a few bobbed heads and an occasional marcel.

The clothes of the men are odd mixtures- some wear kimonas and wooden getas others wear western suits. Almost every man wears a straw hat, no matter what the rest of his costume, and the straw hat and a cane in association with a kimona was odd, indeed.

The streets in Tokyo are quite wide and are paved in the main business section, which looks much like any modern business district anywhere- most of it has been built up since the earthquake seven years ago. Traffic is heavy and the rule of the road is to the left. The pedestrian apparently has the right of way. To see taxis shoot in and out, dodging pedestrians, while moving at full speed and honking furiously meanwhile, was to make ones hair stand on end! All vehicles- street-cars, autos, bicycles- have brushes near the ground and attached near the rear wheels in such a way that pedestrians are protected from splashing of mud and water in damp weather. I must say I quite enjoyed my day in Tokyo.

We were only one day in Shanghai, and saw many new and interesting things. There is only one thing I want especially to mention- the dwellings and office buildings in the English and American parts of the city have no screens, but neither do they have either flies or mosquitoes- both of which are prevalent in other parts of the city.

Hongkong is very British- and after seeing other cities enroute, the order and cleanliness there was welcome and refreshing. I could rave on at length about the city and its beauties but must not take the time. It is a very remarkable place in many ways. It was here that I encountered for the first time the difference in exchange and found an American dollar equivalent to $3.20 in Hongkong currency. This exchange is favorable to us now but no one knows when the exchange may vary and American money be twice the local currency- so exchange is almost as much of a gamble as the Stock Market!

The Island of Hainan was finally reached on the 18th of September. It is rightfully called the Isle of Palms. I have learned to recognize three varieties of palms, so far. The vegetation is all quite tropical. Some of the products grown here are bananas, pineapples, oranges, coffee, tea, rice, cotton, indigo, peanuts, sweet potatoes,- but probably none are grown for export, save indigo. There are a great many native vegetables that I have not learned to call by name tho I like them when prepared for the table.

The port city, [illegible]ow and the capitol city, Kiungchow, both lie on the coastal plain, but there are mountains inland, the greatest height being 6000 feet. The craters of two extinct volcanoes loom against the horizon south of the port and are a prominent landmark, both by land and by sea. The soil is chiefly volcanic ash and is very productive.

Hoihow is a city of 20000 or so and is quite progressive for a Chinese city. The main streets are paved and are fairly wide. Modern business buildings are going up. An auto-bus line communicates with Kiungchow and with Kachek. One also runs to Nodoa, ninety miles inland, when the Communists leave the bridges alone, but one of their pet hobbies since July has been to dig ditches across the auto road and to tear out the approches to bridges.

The thing at Hoihow that I found almost hardest to be reconciled to was the women laborers- coolie labor. They carry almost unbelievable loads by means of a pole across the shoulder- bricks, sand , any building material- fat hogs to market- grain or any other produce. And their wages seem pitiful to me, tho it is good to them, and is probably better than it used to be. For instance, a 'boss' mason gets from 70 to 80 cents a day, his helper gets about 60 cents a day, and the women coolies get only 45 cents a day. And they bring up families on that!

The mission hospital in Hoihow is the leading mission hospital on the island. It was built many years ago and needs to be remodeled, but in spite of handicaps, a tremendous amount of work is done there. I feel sure the doctor in charge is doing far more here with the crowded quarters and inadequate equipment than could be done with similar equipment anywhere at home. The hospital at Kachek- my home, and 70 miles inland- is new and the work is smaller. During my language study years a Chinese woman doctor and a trained midwife, also Chinese, are in charge. I can look in every now and again but the Language Committee are rather strict and I am not permitted to do any work. This, I find , is a big incentive to learn the language!

There is a school for girls and another for boys at the Kiungchow compound, in both of which there are Chinese Christian teachers. One American teacher is on the faculty in each school. Because of unsettled conditions on the island in the past few years these schools are not as large as they used to be, but do show the fruits of former effort in the Christian teachers they now have, and in the pastors and Bible women they have sent out. The boys school at Kachek is staffed completely by Christian Chinese teachers.

The churches at each station are served by Chinese pastors, and other pastors are tireless in their preaching of the Word in the hospitals and in the streets. Women come in from the country to church, sometimes coming five and six miles, on foot, rain or shine, for the church service. There is much work yet to be done in the inland parts of the island and among certain aboriginal tribes in the mountains. At present it is not very safe for foreigners to go into the mountains very far, but certain of the Chinese evangelists have gone in and report need for workers. It is hoped that as soon as things quiet down, one or two men and one of the foreign women may go in and do this pioneer evangelistic work that is so much needed.

The Chinese here are kindly dispoded toward the foreigner and in general the surrounding territory is quiet. I like these people- already they seem to be my people. I like Kachek and am happy and satisfied here, and feel that I have fallen into a happy place.

By the time this reaches you it will be the holiday season. My heartiest greetings to you for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Yours as ever,

Esther Morse

November 22, 1930.

To Ruby, Emily Grace: 11/26/30

Kachek, Island of Hainan,
November 26, 1930.

I would so enjoy writing to you with pen and ink but there is so much to tell, that I'm afraid that method is prohibitive from the point of view of both time and space. So, with hopes for your leniency, I will do my best with the 'hunt and peck' typewriter method.

I have referred to my coming out here to the mission field as the Great Adventure and I have no reason to think that the title should be changed, My only comment on that title is that it isn't half large enough to cover the actual enterprise- from almost any angle that it may be viewed. In the first place, while my newness to the field doesn't permit me to speak with any authority, my impressions have been that the pictures drawn in mission study books and mission magazines are rather too restrained- actuality is much more interesting, as well as much more distressing, sometimes. On the other hand, living conditions , while different are not as hard as one is often led to believe. To illustrate; some years ago a family came to this island and the husband felt the missionaries were living in luxury and he had no right to live as the others were living. He lived in a native house I am told , and had no servants. His field of usefulness was terminated by ill health sooner than there was a reasonable right to expect. Later, another missionary came to the island and was apalled by the living conditions- that the other missionaries were barely getting along with necessities and should have far more luxuries provided. Those are the two extremes, I suppose. My own reaction is that people live quite comfortably. Those who wish, have their pianos with them. There are sewing machines and Victrolas; comfortable beds; cookstoves of American make for those who are not satisfied with the charcoal variety; American mail once a month at least, sometimes oftener, with books and magazines as well as letters. What do people want?

Another side of the picture is the opportunities that exist- they are all here of course, but the opportunities nowadays are not the pioneer ones of a generation ago. If I were to criticize the enterprise, which I am certainly not going to do, I would suggest that more definite information about actual activities should be given to the people at home. I do not mean the unpleasant things, such as robbers, or snakes, or storms- these should be incidentals . The things I have found of interest since coming and I think I would have enjoyed knowing them before have been the biographical sketches of workers on the island , foreign and Chinese alike; tales of the imprint of Christ-like living on simple people; finding the comparisons between these people and the Old Testament characters, and the likenesses , these latter being many and prevalent; learning the limitations of these people in their acceptance of the Gospel- no limitation in the Gospel, but in its different application to their needs than we ordinarily see and accept. To have had some of these things instead of more or less vague statements about needs and fields, would have been of much value to me. To come back to the cause- perhaps the Field needs a great novelist to portray the ordinary things in comely style. I don't know. I'm just putting down the things that have impressed me. I used to think of the Orient as the place of color and romance. I have ceased to think of it in just those terms and it now means a place of dirt and smells. However the romance is still here and if romance is the thing people at home want, I pray for a writer to give them that aspect of the mission enterprise.

I'll try to come down to earth and give a few of the facts I have been raving about instead of the abstractions. Hainan is a very pretty island- prettier than I had anticipated. If I had been wishing for the most beautiful surroundings possible I think I could have been sent to no other place. The vegetation is quite tropical and the whole atmosphere is a type to captivate imaginations. This inland station where I am located is rather more isolated than some might like. However we are not at all cut off from the outside world. There is auto-bus and mail connection daily with the port city. It is a matter of about three hours by car to the port, in good weather and any length of time over that if the roads are bad or the car goes haywire. Occasionally one has some trouble of other sorts-there are still bandits on the island- but such things are very rare. In the six

weeks that I've been here it has not been the isolation that has worn on me but the constant stream of visitors. However I recall that not all are made as I am and welcome the visitors for the other's sakes.

I have found the Chinese very friendly and I have no fear of them. Some of the workers on the island have told me they had to overcome a certain repugnance and fear before they were able to do very much. I am very fortunate if that is at all a common experience- which I doubt. I can see a great deal in some of my associates already- Among the Chinese, I especially mean. I have already found that some of the means of winning over persons in America are equally effective among these people. And- I have already found that I am to be a confidante for some of them. I am glad for all of this. On the other hand I am learning that no matter how steadfast these people may be, no matter how strict their adherence to our ways (I speak of the hospital routine now) they are still Chinese and seem quite unconsciously to slip into old ways of doing things. Dirt is never quite as horrible to them as to us- even tho' they are cleanly themselves. Cleaning up regularly is more or less useless routine to them. The path of least resistance is so easy to follow. And even the best and brightest of them lapse.

The maternity work is to be my alloted work here- that and other work for women. I am glad for that. The little Chinese babies I have seen so far are just as cute and just as dear as any babies anywhere. One thing has happened here that I hope will not happen while a patient is in the hospital again. A woman came in and had her baby- a nice little girl. She did not dare take it home for her husband is elderly and he wants a son. All her babies have been girls. Fortunately for the baby there was a family in the market who wanted to adopt a baby girl and the baby was given to them while the mother was still in the hospital. Of course if the transfer had occurred after the baby had left the hospital I would feel we had no direct responsibility in the matter, but to have it sent out as it was rather roused my ire- at least the baby had a right to as good a start in life as we could give it. However, since I have no authority in the hospital until I have learned the language, I was rather helpless, but I 'sputtered' enough to let all the hospital assistants know how I felt about it. The Chinese woman doctor had raised no protest at all- she is Chinese and their attitude is stronger than the claims of that baby for life. It is most fortunate that the baby was not put to death.

I've just raved on and spoken as I think. I hope I may not have said anything that won't 'set' well, but it has been a big help to me to get it out of my system to you, whom I feel quite sure will understand how I feel about lots of these things. And I would very much appreciate your reaction to these wild ravings of mine. Thanks for being such a good listener!

Holiday greetings to you- may the best be yours this coming year.

December 21, 1930

[illegible] had a [illegible]
[illegible] seems [illegible] the [illegible] to [illegible]
[illegible] are all predicted a storm [illegible] now [illegible]
[illegible] is a [illegible] in progress [illegible]
[illegible] the poor farmers need the [illegible]
[illegible] Rice must be [illegible] water and [illegible]
[illegible] for the rice planting [illegible] and [illegible]
The seed rice has come up nicely but has to be trans-
planted - one plant at a time. There should be about 3 inches
of water over the soil at the time of transplanting - so [illegible]
to say we are all longing for rain.

I was wondering if you would be interested in the [illegible] most kitchens [illegible] the house [illegible] some distance from the house but ours happens to be adjacent to the living-room. While some homes use [illegible] metal stoves, our kitchen is provided with a stone fireplace in which charcoal is burned - it being a [illegible] cheaper than [illegible] firewood. This fireplace [illegible] the term 'fireplace'. It is really a [illegible] stone platform with four or six square fire boxes in it in which the charcoal is placed. Kettles set directly over the [illegible] which makes a very hot fire. The fire boxes have [illegible] opening in front and if the fire isn't [illegible] enough to [illegible] the cook [illegible] fans [illegible] with a palm leaf fan [illegible]! [illegible] an empty kerosene tin is used. A door has been fitted in it by the tinsmith and a grate [illegible] placed over the fire box and a pan of glowing charcoal put on top. This seems very crude but it *works*!

Our cook had been apprenticed to a baker in the city before he came to us. He makes lovely white bread and cake and pastry - his pie crust is a marvel to us all! We have waffles on Sunday mornings and anything else we can have at home - providing it doesn't cost too much! Once or twice a week we have Chinese food served Chinese fashion so that I may learn to use chopsticks. I do only moderately well with them so far but don't mind using them a bit - just takes practise!

To return to the servant problem - our reason for having them is to free the missionary for other duties. At present I'm not working much in the hospital but when I do learn enough words to work there I wouldn't have time to do my own cooking + washing + still do

a good part of the things we have seen to do [illegible] - The [illegible] [illegible] is [illegible] of this region [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] good [illegible] some [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. [illegible] more [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] ways of farming is [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] - the [illegible] [illegible]! [illegible] [illegible] to [illegible], take care of [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] farming in the south [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] baptized [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] in the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] in the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] interested. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] other [illegible] [illegible]. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] to [illegible] some years ago [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] she had [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] (neither [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]) [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible]. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] some of them Christians [illegible] [illegible] not. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the Lord's Prayer [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the Bible [illegible] is [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] perhaps some day [illegible] [illegible] be interested [illegible] [illegible].

An interesting [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible] of one of the hospital assistants to the [illegible] [illegible] the hospital [illegible] Christmas [illegible] [illegible] Chinese [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] a good match. The [illegible] [illegible] good [illegible] I'm sure I [illegible] [illegible] much with chopsticks as I could have done with a fork. There is another feast planned for Christmas day [illegible] [illegible] another chance to practise. It is a wedding feast this time - a Christian family near here chose Christmas as the wedding day for their daughter. The [illegible] [illegible] and foreign unmarried women are invited to the wedding. Evidently the Chinese think we unmarried folks are the heads of our houses. If we can't attend a wedding the proper thing to do is to return the invitation!

Must say goodbye for now. My best wishes to all of you. I hope you are all in good health.

Yours -

Esther [illegible].

Jan 8, 1931

Dear Cleveland People:

Just now we are enjoying a very nice rain - coming straight down & lots of it. It is most welcome, too.

Since I last wrote I've experienced a Christmas and a New Year in Hainan. Both were enjoyable. We had a Christmas tree & all our gifts together at the home where there are children. Was well remembered - more than was deserving I feel. On New Years day it was my partner's & my turn to give the dinner for all the station. We had five guests from other stations as well, four of them coming from Canton to visit us.

There has been anxiety & sorrow as well as festivity. The principal of the boys school - Mr Lin Tsian-koang - was ill all during the holidays & died yesterday. He was given every medical attention possible but could not survive. (His infection was very similar to what mama's had been). The funeral was held yesterday afternoon - it was a Christian service but had quite a few of the Chinese customs attached to it too. For example - the school boys made banners extolling the virtues of the man & these were placed in the chapel during the funeral & preceded the coffin to the grave. The widow & children wore white garments (the mourning color) and sack-cloth on their heads. The custom of firecrackers preceding & following the funeral procession was used, too - the Chinese love firecrackers! It was the first funeral I'd seen here. We are finding it hard to replace Mr Lin in the school - he was an exceptional man, both as an educator & Christian - and I regret his going very much.

Under separate cover I am sending several news letters for the various Cleveland families. Will you please see that they are distributed - and my best wishes to all the Cleveland folks too - in this New Year? These newsletters give an idea of the work of the mission & are more or less of a message from all of us to our friends at home.

I've done a little more on the language now than when I first wrote. Was counting up the characters I know & can write and find I know about 150. Inasmuch as we must know 1000 by the end of the first year, that still means a lot of study. It is interesting to take characters apart for their meanings. To illustrate, this is the character for "time" 時. It is made of these 3 words: sun - 日, and earth - 土, and inch - 寸. That is really what it is - the sun moving across the earth by inches constitutes time, doesn't it? But not all characters

are as ~~in~~ interesting as these one, tho'. Figures may be written 3 ways. The usual way is called "little writing": 1—is 一, 2 is 二, 3 is 三, 4 is 四, 5 is 五, 6 is 六, 7 is 七, etc. This is the type found in books & in ordinary written work & letters. The business man or shopkeeper has a sort of shorthand, as follows: 〡, 〢, 〣, 〤, 〥, 〦, 〧, 〨, 〩, 10, etc. But to write checks or to make a figure so no one can change it, a character known as "big writing" is used: 1 is 壹, 2 is 貳, 3 is 叁, etc.

There is as much difference in the way the Chinese make characters as there is in the handwriting of any two persons anywhere. So its all a game — = study back of the game, tho'.

My good wishes are always = your people — may 1931 be a year of satisfaction in many ways —

Miss Elliott - 7/28/35

Almost two years ago a group of young people bade farewell to friends and loved ones and native land, and faced westward across the Pacific. Tho' their emotions at this parting were as varied as the individuals experiencing them, the same motive actuated them all, however differently each would have expressed it. The devotional reference for that day was Hebrews 11:8 - 'and he went out, not knowing whither he went.'

During these two years some have been working in Japan, and others have scattered to various points in China. All have seen present mission field conditions, tho' for some all experiences have been urban, and others have had contacts with rural work. It is safe to say all have learned many things,- some of which they would like to pass on to others who contemplate mission service, and other things which they'd perhaps be happy to be able to forget. For truly, for each one, 'he went out, not knowing whither he went.'

Each has had letters with comments on his wonderful and sacrificial service-- and that letter may have come on a day that was as dull as dishwater (was the word originally ditchwater?); or an eager correspondent may yearn for the thrills he is experiencing when he hasn't a real one since his first letters came from home. There are all sorts of days, of course, good days and bad days, and the average, commonplace days that make up the bulk of life.

'He went out, not knowing whither he went.' On a 'good' day he might like to tell a prospective missionary how very much he likes his surroundings-- the tall palms outlined against the sky, the flowering trees with colors so vivid it almost hurts, the green of the rice-fields that is like no other green on earth, the banked sunset clouds, the lazy hum of insects on hot days, the breathless quiet before a torrential downpour, the order and quiet within the compound walls. He'd tell how much one's life out here is like living at home--even to one's favorite dishes at mealtime, after the cook has learned to make them, of course! He would tell of the friendliness of the nationals, their interest in him and in his family, their eagerness to have him learn their language. He'd tell of the progress of the local work, with a quickly acquired pride , of the opportunities for work and the needs that exist, and would speak with enthusiasm of his hopes and desires and prayers for this work and this people. He would tell how much like 'home folks' many of these people really are, how sweet and dear the babies, how soon the language sounds so natural to the ears even tho' the meaning still is vague. He would tell friendly little anecdotes about his associates- this one has done this thing, or is loved for this trait, or is honored for that deed. He would enlarge on the lovable qualities of each one, and 'boost' for them after the fashion of youthful enthusiasts everywhere.

But if it should be a 'bad' day, then he might feel like saying, 'Whats the use? These people will never learn to accept responsibility-- all they care about is personal gain.' He will suspect every national of being ready to stick a knife in him- figuratively and actually- and sinister motives will be read into every simple action. He will be discouraged and angry , first because of some ones failure to co-operate in an adequate way, and then at himself, that his temper flies off so, that he has no better control of himself. He'd like to advise any prospective missionary to come from a family where a solicitous parent or sister or aunt or grandparent had to know every move he made, to prepare him for senior missionaries whose well-intentioned attentions grow irksome. He'd advise him to have lived in a small town for a while to accustom him to the narrowed interests and the gossip of a small community, - and a small town can produce no venom more deadly than that found within compound walls that enclose divergent, and perhaps antagonistic, personalities. He'd advise him to have worked in a small church whose leaders had had long practise in following a fixed routine, and who constitutionally opposed any changes-- that he may not be totally overcome by the 'It can't be done', or, 'You don't know these people', which so effectively crushes spontaneity and too soon makes new folks just more cogs in already cumbersome machinery. He'd like to advise him to have held for a time some executive position where he would be subjected to storms of criticism--that he might grow a protective shell, or hide, to help turn the criticism he will be sure to face, sooner or later.

But the average, commonplace, ordinary every day? It is so usual and so humdrum he'd probably think there was no reason to mention any of it to a prospective missionary! The things once so strange and quaint, he hardly notices now, or if he does it is to think how natural they seem. There is the constant temptation to treat as natural phenomena the things that once seemed so wrong - plural marriages, for instance, or the casual attitude toward female infants.

Almost every day he hears rumors of Communist raids in some nearby village or district or a patient comes to the hospital, the victim of such an attack. The people are in quite constant terror of attack and many dare not spend two successive nights in the same place, and knows no one whom he may trust. They cannot understand and do not believe that the foreigners have no such fear, and some consequently carry the double burden of fear for themselves and fear for the foreigner, lest he be careless and fall into evil hands. And he would not be likely to tell the prospective missionary that he has learned the bugle call which means the execution squad is taking a man out to be shot. Nor would he mention that much hearing of it has dulled his hars to the shot that terminates a life.

There are his daily duties to perform, and language study is always on the docket. Sometimes the days work is engrossing, and he fails to notice what is going on around him, or may only raise his head with the first staccato reports of the machine-guns, as the soldiers begin their target practise, and may fail to notice entirely the sounds of a funeral going by. Noisy Fords may wheeze up the grade, or firecrackers announce some event, great or small, but he will evince no interest, for it is all so ordinary.

Mail comes every few days with books or magazines besides the letters, and then there are letters to write, and he may be as good or as poor a correspondent, as if he was at home! For relaxation, he may turn to tennis, or walking, or tinkering with the car, if he has one, or running the lawn-mower- and incidentally it is better for the lawn-mower if a foreigner rather than a Chinese takes his exercise that way!- or he may choose to ride the bicycle around and take pictures of interesting places and things.

There are no reticences in a mission station--everyone knows everytime anyone is ill, or has a temper, and why! The nationals are as gossipy as any 'home folks' he ever knew. And they love to come and gossip with the foreigner. Each compound has some person whose idiosyncrasies cause endless comment, and it may happen that such a source of gossip may be an able purveyor of gossip, too. Except that the setting and some of the incidents are different he might as well be at home, as far as interesting events are concerned- they just don't seem to happen.

And yet, -now and again he has the feeling that he is in his particular niche and there is no place else on earth where he could make any more or any better contribution to the world than he can right here. It may seem futile at times, this trying to live a consistent life among people whose background and culture and environment is so different, yet there is a sort of satisfaction in it that is hard to explain. And even in the ordinary every day-life he must go on as he started 'not knowing whither he went', but he does know in Whom he has believed.

Mrs L.L. Ziegler - 6/23/32
Mrs Vance - 9/29/32

A Day's Routine in the Hoihow Hospital.

This morning I wakened early, before the sun was up, and realized the light was too bright for my eyes, so covered them with the black bandage that is always handy, and promptly went to sleep again. The next I know was the sound of the cheerful clink of a teacup as my tea and toast were brought in, - the signal to be up and at work.

An hour later, seven o'clock, found me at the hospital , starting to make rounds. This first patient ought to have an operation, but has been holding out for over a week. Now that she is no better, she has asked her husband to come today, and perhaps they will give their consent. The next patient has dysentery , and while she is a trifle better, she is still most uncomfortable. The third and fourth patients have had operations and are enough better that they want to go home and we must spend some time inducing them to stay a few days longer. The next bed has an old woman who refused operation and who has suffered greatly for many days. Here are several patients whose cases require more study, and each day they want to know what their disease is, and when they may go home, and so on. This woman h d a foreign body in her eye, this one is here because she wants to be able to have children, this girl has a T.B. hip, this woman had a double pneumonia, and will soon be able to go home, again. These babies have high fevers and 'summer complaint'-- their anxious mothers stay with them all the time. And here is a woman with a gastric ulcer -- and so thro' several wards in which every bed is filled.

Now I must see all the maternity patients, and usually they require no medecine-- but today there is one mother with dysentery, another with a sore breast, and a third on the verge of hysteria because she thinks her baby will die today-- all her other babies have died on the seventh day, and this one is seven days old today. A mother with a premature infant must be reassured that the baby is all right. And a young girl whose first baby is a few days old doesn't want to eat, so she must be encouraged and urged to eat. Another young girl wants the foreign doctor to examine her and tell her <u>when</u> the baby will be born!

Eight-thirty, and time for breakfast. At ten I return to the out-patient clinic, and my patients include seven womenand six children whose diagnoses are varied-- a woman who wants to know if she has syphilis, a child with fever, another with dysentery (they will not consent to enter the hospital), a girl with an infected hand, a child with boils on the scalp, two children with worms, and a child witha deficiency disease which has already caused blindness in one eye, and the other is affected, but some vision may be saved. That case was admitted to the hospital. Meanwhile I have seen a tongue-tied child, a man with leprosy, and a child with the cheek torn by the horn of a buffalo-cow, all patients of other doctors in the clinic. The woman I mentioned earlier has consented to an operation so that is arranged for the afternoon, and other operations are scheduled.

Twelve -thirty, and time for lunch. The time from two to four is spent in the operating room, and immediately afterwards there are two new cases to be seen-- babies with very high temperatures. Afternoon rounds come next About a quarter of five I returned to my room and tried to clean up and cool off a bit, and at five was called to see one of the babies who was admitted earlier in the afternoon. He never had a chance, and we didn't have a chance to help him either, and poor baby, at least his going was quiet and painless. I felt like tears and on going back to the residence compound, was asked to drop in at one of the homes for a cup of tea. A bit of tea about that time in the afternoon does restore ones cheerfulness tremendously.

It so happened there were no night calls this particular day, but sometimes one must go over after supper . However the above is a fairly representative day as to duties and as to types of cases seen in this hospital. Of course the men physicians see all the men, and they could report an even greater variety of cases and diagnoses, for men predominate in numbers of inpatients, here.

Dr McCormicks - 1/24/32 Christie - 1/25/32 Aunt Nellie - 1/25/32 Nellie C Sadie L. Jennie } 2/7/32 Aunt Lizzie Lillian D Ruth Brehm Viola } 2/8/32 Ruby - 2/19/32

Inasmuch as my eyes had been a matter of concern for some months, just after Christmas I was dispatched to Canton to consult Dr. Hayes of the Southern Baptist Mission, and the best eye-specialist in South China. Since his days are full and busy ones, and since it was necessary for me to go to him on several occasions, it happened that I spent some time in Canton, and visited all the compounds throughout the city where our church has work.

Fa-ti and Fong-tsuen compounds are across the river from Shameen, the foreign concession, just a short while by sampan. At Fong-tsuen a college friend has charge of the school for the blind. Poor blind children! They sang for me and their voices are clear and sweet - and perhaps I only imagined a plaintive note. Their accompanist was one of the teachers, herself blind. Of all sorts of human suffering I think blindness most tortures me - it is more than a mental state, more than pity, the things I feel for blind people. I wonder if I'd ever have the courage to work among such afflicted children.

Paak Hok Tung - White Crane's Nest - has many foreign houses and True Light Middle School for girls. This locality is almost entirely modern with foreign style houses and surroundings. The school is splendidly equipped. It is ten minutes by speed-boat, a half hour by motor-launch and an hour and a quarter - or more - by sampan from Shameen. Shameen was originally a sandbar in the river given by the Chinese to the British and French for residences - to keep the foreigner out of China. Now it is the best business area in the city and Chinese flock to it in times of trouble as the only safe place in Canton. The various foreign consulates are located there and the Stars and Stripes floats near the Tricolor of France. Having digressed thus - at True Light one of the teachers was my cabinmate on our trip out fifteen months ago and we had much to consider together after our brief time in China.

Lingnan University was the next compound visited. Theirs is an extensive plant some distance down river. Was there for lunch one day with another college friend - that is, he graduated from Hastings College some years after I did and our paths have chanced to touch out here. I'm proud to be an alumna of a college which has graduates of the caliber of Miss Carpenter at Fong-tsuen and Mr. Wood at Lingnan. At Lingnan also I met a girl whose best friend at University was a girl from my home town in Nebraska. How the world narrows!

At Union Normal School the best friend of summer vacation days gave me a wonderful few days. The Normal School is beautifully located and is still very small. I'm praying the financial hardships of these days may not sink this worthy enterprise - for we have no other project in Canton that is doing the type of work this school has in hand.

Canton, while being modernized very rapidly, still has many of the old crooked, narrow streets, with stone flags for paving, if paving exists at all - uneven, damp, dark and with at least fifty-seven varieties of odors. A foreigner who has been stationed in Peking heretofore, recently came to Canton and exclaimed in pleasure, "At last I have found the China of my dreams and anticipations. Peking isn't China at all."

I saw numerous wedding processions - this being a favorite wedding season - a band leading the procession - sometimes decorated floats and chairs, besides the red bridal chair, sometimes only the bridal chair resplendent in red silk and tassels and mirrors, but so tightly closed that the bride can neither see out nor be seen.

One funeral procession caught my attention as it was the most elaborate I'd ever seen. Banners, decorated chairs bearing images of many sorts, gaily caparisoned horses with painted riders, and a Chinese band preceded the ornately decorated coffin. Following were the chief mourners - only one, an old old man, being carried in a sedan chair - the rest walked singly, dressed in sackcloth. Following these were many hired mourners - their tattered clothing under the mourning clothes testifying their position in such a procession. The final ludicrous note was the sight of two hired mourners a block behind the rest of the procession. They were on a bicycle, pedalling furiously to catch up, their sackcloth headbands flying in the breeze!

Once I saw a long procession of students, with banners, going through the main streets. Patriotic meetings and harangues and excursions have kept the government school students away from classes nearly two-thirds of the first semester - yet they will expect to pass. Have they not served their country?

Buses are stopped by police now and again and all men passengers searched - for weapons, chiefly - an effort to prevent unauthorized and misdirected malevolence toward Japanese, perhaps. Women and foreigners are seldom searched - they just looked at my briefcase on such an occasion, but I did not have to open it.

The Sun Yat Sen Memorial Auditorium in Canton is just finished and is a beautiful building. Some one has said it ranks close to the Taj Mahal in beauty of architecture.

Saw also an old Mohammedan mosque where is said to be the tomb of Mohammed's paternal uncle, and which one may see for a consideration in silver!

The City of the Dead is a quiet building with numerous crypts where coffins may be left until a suitable burial place and time has been indicated by the astrologers. These men perhaps are influenced not only by the stars but by the state of the exchequer of the family of the deceased. The coffins are hermetically sealed and the funeral banners and images are grouped around it and incense burns continually. Contrary to one's expectations from the name of the place, it is surprisingly well kept, clean and free from all odors save that of burning incense.

A year ago Dr. Scott wrote as one of his impressions of China, "Massed millions, living and dead." The force of that statement became more real as I saw the mountains and hillsides around Canton pitted thickly with graves. The level land is utilized for graves far less than is done in Hainan, and I was struck by the countless numbers that meet the sight as one gets outside the city.

Even here strange epitaphs can be found. Perhaps the most remarkable was at the tomb of a former toothpaste manufacturer. In large characters his worth was extolled and the passing public informed where this kind of dentifrice could be obtained! Even 'go-getter' publicity at home can scarcely equal that.

My sojourn in Canton coincided with a fairly busy social season(!!) among the various missions - it being vacation on some of the compounds. The International Woman's Club meeting and tea was held at the American Consulate and for an hour I was once more under the Stars and Stripes - and all the other races represented there were the foreigners, instead of me!

In Canton one must needs talk price with every ricksha coolie, every boatman, every peddler, every shopkeeper - they think foreigners fools who pay the first price quoted, besides robbing them of the joy of bargaining. So I was glad to get back to quiet Hainan where there are robbers and bandits, true enough, but one does not meet them daily.

Perhaps if you were to make a visit to our compound in Kachek you would find as many things of interest as I did when I first came, but the new and strange so soon becomes the commonplace, that now it seems that days pass without a single interesting event.

But recalling events of the past few weeks I can recall several things, each of which held our attention for a time--- the children of the compound found a bee's nest in an old building and robbed it of honey to the accompaniment of occasional stings; the Easter service were very helpful and ten adults were baptized and admitted to church fellowship; the mother of one of the elders was killed by Reds while he was here for the Easter services; a new-born infant had several hemorrhages, but we were able to control them and he was taken home by a happy mother just a few days ago; there were heavy explosions when a fire started in the ammunition stored in the near-by barracks, and almost everyone in the region thot it was an attack by Reds; We had an unexpected visit from friends from Hoihow; the dry weather was finally broken by thunder-showers-- all these have been incidents in our days.

In various ways we know that spring is here-- the locusts have come, and three times a day, so regularly that faulty timepieces may be set by them, they spend fifteen or twenty minutes in shrill and rhythmic clamor; the birds are nesting under the veranda eaves , and have wordy discussions very early in the mornings; the rains, while a boon to the rice-fields where the young rice is just heading, are making the grass on the lawns unmanageable-- slender stalks of grass-seeds seem to spring up over night, and only eternal vigilance and a sickle can keep them down; the school children are hard to hold indoors at tasks, and the housewife wonders what on earth to feed the family since the gardens are gone and there is so little to buy in the market! Yet spring is none the less welcome.

We have had more flowers this year it seemsto me, perhaps because the foreigners were here all last summer and fall and were able to plant the seeds at the best times. We have had flowers for table decorations all the year, but since December there have been many kinds from which to make a choice. The majority of garden favorites at home could be found in our gardens during the winter and we have a number of flowers that grow easily here, that I never saw grow anywhere at home except with special care. The tulip tree is the only blossoming tree that is in full bloom and beauty now, but in a few weeks we may expect that scarlet of the flame trees, and the yellow of the golden shower trees will add to the appearance of the compound, which I am willing to call the prettiest in the island.

My latest enthusiasm is 'bean milk'. You may, or may not, know that the Chinese people as a whole do not use milk or milk products. There is no such thing as a milkman delivering fresh milk each morning in Hainan, nor can fresh milk be secured at the corner grocery. All the milk and butter and cheese we use comes in tins. And if a patient inthe hospital needs a milk diet, we must buy whatever is in the market (yes, we can get Eagle Brand or several other cheaper varieties in our market in Kachek-- we're very up-to-date.) But this is expensive. Infants who for one cause or another are deprived of their natural source of food supply are lucky if a wet nurse is available. Otherwise they are fed rice water, or soft boiled rice or pre-chewed rice. In north China and Korean Medical schools, experimentation has developed a milk from the native yellow beans. It has the appearance of cow's milk and by adding sugar, salt, and calcium lactate in requisite amounts its composition rivals mothers milk in nutritive and growth-producing substances. I have been hoping for a feeding case to come to the hospital so I could use this milk and try to convince the people in this locality that it is worth trying. It is easy to make and very cheap. My chance came a few weeks ago, and I have been using it in two cases. They are too few to indicate yet what the reaction will be, but I ~~am hoping~~ have found for some degree of satisfaction on the part of the ones who are using the milk. The assistants in the hospital offer no opposition to my use of this milk, but their general attitude is that of patient tolerance towards such foolishness.

[1931 or 1932]

Ruby

The setting moon sheds so pale a light that the very indistinctness of vision makes it seem quite dark. The quiet is broken only by the measured hum of insects. One lies straining the ear for sounds that will indicate the hour. A cock crows- ah, morning cannot be far away. A dog barks, the sound faint in the distance. The windlass of the well creaks - it must be five o'clock and the coolies are beginning the day's work. Sleepy bird voices twitter softly.

It is lighter now. There are footsteps on the gravel walk outside the house. A bugle sounds the reveille. The servants stir in the paved court back of the house. All sounds seem near and very clear. Suddenly, and as one, numbers of cicadas begin their harsh, measured chorus, dwarfing all other sounds. After half an hour, the sudden cessation of this noise gives one a momentary sense of loss- and all other sounds seem faint.

The sun rises and the day is here. Bird songs and chirpings are louder. Roosters seem to try to outdo one another in salutary greetings to the morn. Wind stirs the trees, whispers in the rain tree and rustles thro' the palms. Voices, voices- and many footsteps on the walk outside- workmen on the way to the carpenter shop- school boys on the way to school. A hollow whistling sound indicates some one is blowing thro' a hollow bamboo to start a fire.

A few strokes on a mellow-toned bell- a loud clamor of children's voices- then, crisp counting in Mandarin, betokens morning calisthenics. The bell sounds a second time, and after a while, the sound of a familiar hymn comes from the open doors of the school-room as all gather in morning convocation. The sound of running feet- a belated school boy, perhaps.

From a nest under the veranda roof, baby birds twitter and call. Bird voices seem to come from everywhere- trills and melodies from birds whose names are unknown- crisp twittering of brown sparrows- harsh jay-like calls of the black-and-russet, crested hoopoo - bird cries so many and so constant, so much a part of the atmosphere that they often pass unnoticed.

The morning grows older. The chapel bell calls to morning prayers. The schoolboys study aloud, their voices rising and falling in unison. The carpenter's saws rasp and gnaw thro' long logs. People come and go, their footsteps recorded in memory. The school principal and one of his teachers, have quick, firm footsteps, much like a foreigners'. The mail carrier has a quick step, also, but very light. The language teacher's step is slow and deliberate. All foriegners set the heels down hard.

The day is warm, despite the wind. The noon quiet is broken by the noisy cicadas- and by a bugle in the hands of a schoolboy, who tootles with pertinacity, but without rhythm and without melody. The school-bell brings relief to tortured ears!

This same bell sounds its note at intervals all the lazy afternoon. About midafternoon the wind drops and all sounds seem magnified. The sky overcasts and bird notes seem fewer. The dull impact of taut strings and resilient ball comes clearly- the usual tennis game. Exclamations and laughter punctuate the progress of the game.

Thunder rumbles in the distance- the air is breathlessly hot and close.

Suddenly the air is filled with the rush of raindrops, to the exclusion of other sounds. After half an hour, or an hour, the rain stops, and in the fresh clean air all sounds have a new quality- softer and more vibrant. People stroll about after the rain, and their quiet laughter as they move in small groups about the compound, gives one a feeling of congenial oneness with them- a sense of intimacy that is never felt so genuinely as in the deepening dusk of a rain-washed day.

The far purple mountains receive the sun and the night is here. Birds are hushed in drowsy content. The cicadas devote half an hour to an evening chant. The schoolbell rings again, and voices are raised in study. A baby cries somewhere- footsteps echo on the gravel- a dog barks at the rising moon. A last stroke of the bell marks the end of study- there is motion and clamor for a brief interval- the school sleeps.

All is quiet save the drowsy, even hum of myriads of night insects.